

SHELTER HARBOR FIRE DISTRICT

2013 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

Saturday, August 10, 2013

St. Andrew Lutheran Church

East Beach Road

Charlestown, RI

I. Call to Order

Tom Lloyd called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m. and thanked everyone for coming. A quorum of SHFD residents was declared present.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. Moderator's Comments

Tom Lloyd stated that the slide show playing in the front of the meeting room is showing photos provided by the Nopes Island Conservation Association. A drone was hired to take pre and post-Hurricane Sandy photos of the barrier beach to study effects of the storm.

The Westerly Harbor Management Commission has finalized the Westerly Harbor Management Plan. John Bruno was asked to share information about the Plan later in the meeting.

Money was spent to remediate damage from Hurricane Sandy and snow storm Nemo. FEMA paid for 75 percent of SHFD's Sandy expenses and expenses from Nemo are expected to be paid soon.

Last winter, two parties made aquaculture viability applications for projects in Quonochontaug Pond. Approving the applications could have allowed projects to begin which could ultimately grow in size to a maximum of three acres. The CRMC guideline is for aquaculture projects in the Rhode Island coastal ponds to have a maximum coverage area of five percent of any waters for these projects. One project application was in the Charlestown end of the pond and the other was proposed for the area near Ski Beach. The CRMC held a public hearing and some members of the community went to that meeting and made comments in opposition to the applications. Those community members are Ted Calendar, Dick Ferris, Gail Mallard, Richard Sherman for WYC, and Peter Ruggiero. We should expect that there will be more applications in the future and residents will be advised via email blasts of permit activity and appeals for support in scheduled meetings for permits.

Harbor Field has been named. Some events will be held there throughout the summer and residents will receive notice of them.

There is still a lot of speeding in Shelter Harbor, in particular on Wagner Road. There may be speed traps set up on Wagner Road. If you see people speeding please ask them to slow down.

Stuart Graham came to the BoG last fall asking about the overgrowth of trees in Shelter Harbor and volunteered to fund the hiring of an arborist. Stuart engaged Matthew Largess, an ISA Certified Arborist for the study. The study was done and will be presented at the next regular BoG meeting.

There are a lot of corners in Shelter Harbor that have low visibility. The corner of Wagner and Donizetti and the corner of Wagner and Bach have overgrowth and the owners are asked to cut back this overgrowth for safe visibility.

The Nopes Island Conservation Association (NICA) is attempting to enter into a lease agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&W) in order to have the USF&W manage its property on the barrier beach. The USF&W headquarters in Washington, D.C. returned the lease agreement to NICA and has asked that NICA work to interest more barrier beach property owners to join in the lease.

The Dunn's Corners Fire District contract negotiation will begin soon.

Shelter Harbor has had a terrific past year. The Moderator noted that we have a lot of people who volunteer and he asked for a round of applause for all volunteers.

IV. Approval of the Minutes from the Annual Meeting, August 13, 2012

The meeting Agenda cites August 13, 2012 as the date of the previous Annual Meeting. The correct date was August 11, 2012. The date on the minutes is correct. A motion was duly made and seconded to approve the Minutes from the Annual Meeting of August 11, 2012. There was no discussion. All present voted in favor and the Minutes were approved.

V. Appointment of Parliamentarian

Tom Lloyd appointed Joe Rucci as Parliamentarian for the Annual Meeting.

VI. Announcements:

A. A Moment of Silence was held in Remembrance of Miriam Brennan, Gib Murphy, Elliot Parkhurst, Kenneth Ritter, and Phillip Rosen.

B. The following new residents were announced and welcomed; Thomas and Megan Carter, 36 Verdi; Liz Ann Cunningham, 93 Donizetti Road; Daniel and Marie Davenport, 14 Verdi; Kevin J. Navas and Tina Slesonia Navas, 24 Wagner Road; Neil and Claire Sheth, 87 Wagner Road; Jeff and Noreen Werdal, 12 Verdi Road.

C. Liz Miller was thanked for producing the 2013 Directory.

D. Elly Heyder was thanked for updating and managing the SHFD website.

E. Jim and Rochelle Levins were thanked for assembling and distributing the beach pass packets.

F. Michael and Marie McEntee were thanked for running the logo wear.

G. Jack Hardick was thanked for conducting the annual audit of the SHFD finances.

H. Phyllis Visnauskas and Brenda Manning were thanked for the well-attended and highly successful SHFD Ladies' Luncheon.

I. Mary Harrop, Helene Hardick, and their volunteers were thanked for planning the 4th of July Weekend Activities.

J. Harry and Jayne Staley were thanked for use of the Landing for the 4th of July activities.

K. Steve and Karen Matheson were thanked for coordinating Dinner for 8.

L. Bruno and Mary Di Cecco were thanked for the summer tennis tournaments.

M. Bev Howland was thanked for running the Book Swap.

N. Helene Hardick was thanked for organizing the Adult Cocktail Party.

O. John Bruno and Alan Ledbetter were thanked for the Westerly Band Concert.

P. Mary Hardy was thanked for organizing the “Pond Paddle,” although the 2013 Pond Paddle was rained out last weekend.

Q. Carl and Val Blume were thanked for organizing the Social Hour at the church following the Annual Meeting.

R. John and Dorothy Bruno and Team were thanked for their efforts to put on the Annual Beach Party on Saturday, August 17, at 5:00 p.m.

S. Mark Kane was thanked for organizing the upcoming Shelter Harbor Kids Fishing Tournament.

T. Karen Matheson and Roland Hellwig were thanked for planting the roses and for providing SHFD with the landscapers’ discount.

U. Jim Levins was thanked for building a first class handrail on the beach walkway.

VII. Report of the Tax Collector

Harry Gregory stated the Fire District has collected all but \$83.32.

Upon approval of the budget later in the meeting, Harry will advertise for the billing and collection of taxes. The tax bills will go out around the 1st of September and are due by September 30. The tax levy will impose 1.175 cents per thousand dollars of assessed valuation as per the Town of Westerly.

VIII. Report of the Treasurer

Glen Berwick noted that we completed the year with a General Fund profit of \$675.03 and that SHFD Total Fund Equity (cash equity) amounted to \$118,446 as of June 30, 2013.

SHFD received reimbursement from FEMA for storm damage expenses paid for to date and other expenses not yet paid for by SHFD because the damage had not been repaired as of the end of our fiscal year. There remains a receivable from FEMA for other storm damage expenses repaired and paid for prior to the end of our fiscal year.

Accrued expenses include, not only the above noted storm damage expenses, but also BOG approved tennis court fence repairs and certain Bean Pot expenses.

Ten vendors, including payroll as a vendor, account for 90 percent of our expenditures with fire protection being the single largest expense for the SHFD.

IX. Report of the Auditor

Tom Lloyd explained that Jack Hardick, who could not be at the Annual Meeting, was appointed the Fire District auditor on July 20, 2013. Jack Waters read the following statement from the Auditor's report, "I have examined the financial statements and records of the Shelter Harbor Fire District for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2013. In my opinion, the statements fairly present the financial position of the District at that date and the results of the operations for the fiscal year then ending."

Mark Pratt stated the fire district should be very grateful for having Jack Hardick conduct the audit as it saved the district a significant amount of money.

Tom Lloyd requested a comprehensive motion to accept the reports of the Tax Collector, Treasurer, and Auditor. The request for a motion was duly made and seconded. There was no discussion. All present voted in favor and the motion carried.

Harry Gregory asked that the minutes reflect appreciation to Jack Hardick for conducting the audit.

X. Comments on Reports of Committees and Agents

A. Beach

Bob Hatfield reminded everyone that the beach passes are two-year passes and that if lost, or misplaced, there will be a fee to replace.

Bob asked Jim Levins and his crew to stand and be recognized for their efforts to set up all of the beach equipment. Bob thanked the Beach Committee members.

Bob stated that so far in the season there were 21 incidents requiring first aid and two assists. He asked residents to please pay attention to the flags at the beach and know what they mean.

In answer to a question about the fine for the beach tag, Bob explained that the amount of money is set arbitrarily as an incentive to encourage people to keep track of the passes. Residents are responsible for the pass.

In response to a question asked about how much money is saved by using two-year passes, Rochelle Levins answered that \$600 is saved with this system.

In case a pass is lost, a new pass number is given and the old pass number is cancelled.

B. Beanpot Gardens

Karen Matheson thanked everyone for the wonderful comments on the roses and hydrangeas.

C. Bylaws

Joe Rucci stated there will be a motion on the Bylaws later in the meeting and he will comment on the Bylaws then.

D. Community Functions

Mary Harrop thanked everyone in SH, especially the volunteers. Further, Mary mentioned that there must be at least 100 people involved as volunteers and thanked them for their time, materials, and helping with events. Mary thanked Helene Hardick who serves as the co-chair for Community Functions.

Sue Nardone announced that she would like to step down from the responsibility of coordinating the adult food table for the annual 4th of July party. A volunteer is needed to take on this job.

Bev Howland advised that this year she is ending the book swap on Aug. 24 instead of Labor Day. If anyone would like to volunteer to take books to the Library with Bev, she would appreciate the help.

Mary continued her report advising that Harbor Field had its first event with over 65 people. She encouraged people to please watch the bulletin board and email blasts for an end-of-year party.

The Beach Party is August 17. Mary asked Dorothy Bruno to speak about the Beach Party. Dorothy Bruno asked residents to bring food for 20 and that the food service begins at 5:00 p.m. The rain date is Sunday, August 18.

Additionally, there will be a 12-and-Under Fishing Derby on August 31.

Mary thanked everyone for all the help. Tom Lloyd thanked Mary for all of the time and effort that she puts into the community events on behalf of Shelter Harbor.

E. Database

Nonie Price thanked Liz Miller for her help to merge the Directory information to update the database. Currently, there are fewer than 30 residents without email addresses.

F. Directory

Liz Miller thanked everyone for their cooperation with the updates that were made for the current Directory. She asked everyone to please contact her with any additional changes. Liz also thanked Tom Lloyd and Nonie Price for their help with the process of taking on the Directory work for the district.

Mary Di Cecco thanked Sylvia Rice for the painting on the cover of the Directory.

G. Harbor Master and Assistant for Dinghies and Moorings, Boat Racks

John Bruno stated that the Harbor Management Commission has

completed the harbor management plan document and that this plan has been submitted to CRMC. John is certain that the plan will be in effect next year. The boat list and mooring list sent out recently via email blast was an effort to update the information from SHFD mooring owners in order to be prepared when the plan is implemented. John does not know how the Town of Westerly will invoice mooring owners for the mooring registration fees when the plan goes into effect.

The swim flat at Grove dock will be fixed by Gooseberry Dock Builder.

John was thanked for all his efforts.

Residents will receive updates on the Harbor Management Plan as needed.

Small Boat Racks

Bob Hatfield explained the effects of Hurricane Sandy on the small boat racks. Hurricane Sandy showed that the summer boat rack locations are vulnerable to damage in storms. Residents can provide feedback.

He read aloud the following proposed changes to the small boat racks policy:

“Storm Sandy showed us that some of our small boat locations are vulnerable. Racks on both Grove and Point docks were submerged at

the high water point. Also in recent years, we have had to work around boats left on the racks over the winter. This makes the maintenance more difficult. We have also had several issues of boats abandoned on the racks.

Accordingly, we are working on a proposal to change the small boat rules to address these issues.

In event of foul weather residents with boats on the docks and other low lying racks will be required to remove their boats to avoid damage from a potential storm surge or high winds. Residents will be advised by email or phone if this need arises. Also, all residents are to remove their boats from the boat racks by November 1 regardless of location. Residents are responsible for removing their own boats.

One proposal that is under consideration is that any boats that are not removed by the residents will be removed by the Shelter Harbor Fire District. In the event that the Fire District incurs expenses to remove boats from the racks, the owners will be expected to reimburse the fire district for any costs associated with the costs of moving and or storing the boats before reclaiming their boats.

Another consideration is that if any boat is not reclaimed within 12 months, the Shelter Harbor Fire District has the right to advertise a description of the boat and, if it is not claimed, put it up for sale. The

fire district would advertise via normal and legal methods.”

H. Finance

Mark Pratt pointed out that the proposed budget represents a 3.9 percent increase over the previous year’s budget. Forty-five percent of the increase is due to an increase in Dunn’s Corners Fire Department charges. Forty-three percent of the increase is due to increases in beach payroll (wages and benefits). Twelve percent of the increase is due to a number of other factors.

In further explaining his report, Mark advised that an analysis of capital reserve is conducted each year and an estimated funding level for the capital reserve is determined. The Finance Committee looks to the future to project costs for road repair and fire protection.

Mark further stated that last year the question was asked if the fire protection costs are competitive. He showed slides of costs for area fire districts, noting that Shelter Harbor is paying \$0.96 (less than one dollar) for the cost/mil of structure value, which is competitive. Negotiations for the next fire protection contract will occur over the next year.

Shelter Harbor is directly between the two Dunn’s Corners fire stations and our protection is good. Further, Dunn’s Corners Fire Department has the highest rating a volunteer organization can attain.

I. Long Range Planning

There is no report for the Long Range Planning Committee.

J. Roads

Jack Waters stated there was significant damage during Hurricane Sandy and snow storm Nemo. Between both storms, there were about 30 trees that came down. FEMA is reimbursing 75 percent of SHFD's costs to clean-up the damage. If SHFD were a private association, we would not have been helped by FEMA, but because we are a quasi-municipal entity we were assisted by FEMA.

The annual brush pickup was in June. The brush was chipped and this saved on dumping fees. There are still wood chips at Point Dock and residents are welcome to help themselves.

There has been an arborist study. There have also been complaints by residents of the umbrella effect of trees on some roads. The town may help with Wagner Road. Overhead trimming will begin.

Ed Nardone stated that large, tall trucks cannot get by forcing the trucks to the middle of the road making it difficult for drivers in the opposite direction to get by.

Dick Ferris stated that if an emergency truck ever came down the road, a resident might not get by.

K. Safety and Security

The lock combination at Point Dock will be changed to 7245. On phone dial pad, 7245 is the word “sail.”

L. Tennis

Mary Di Cecco apologized about the sign at the courts. With Glen’s help, we are having the fence at the courts repaired. Mary thanked the summer tennis players for keeping the gate locked. The End-of-the-Year Tournament is on August 17, and Mary hopes all tennis players will be there. Mary expressed a special note of congratulations to Judy Kelley who won at the Senior Olympics in Cleveland. Mary thanked the tennis advisors, Judy Kelley, Judy Colluci, Helen Romano, and Bruno Di Cecco.

XI. Actions Required of the Meeting

A. Approval of the Budget F/Y 2013-2014

A motion was duly made and seconded to approve the budget for fiscal year 2013-2014. During the discussion phase, a question was asked to clarify the amount of increase in the beach line item. Mark answered that principally the change is due to increase in payroll. Glen stated that there was 12 thousand dollars put into the beach budget from safety and security. The port-o-lets at the beach were also a factor. All present voted in favor of approving the budget. There was no opposition. The motion carried.

A motion was duly made and seconded to advertise for the collection of fire district taxes at the mil rate \$1.175 per thousand of assessed value. There was no discussion. All present voted in favor and the motion carried.

B. Election of Officers F/Y 2013-2014

- 1. Moderator – Tom Lloyd (incumbent)**
- 2. Treasurer – Glen Berwick (incumbent)**
- 3. Tax Collector/Assessor – Harry Gregory (incumbent)**
- 4. Clerk – Nonie Price (incumbent)**

Tom Lloyd asked that the group be elected as a slate. By voice vote, all four officers were elected to another term.

C. Elections of Members of the Board of Governors (two positions)

- 1. John Bruno**
- 2. Vivian Duff**

Tom Lloyd explained Shelter Harbor has two open BoG positions each year. Elly Heyder and Mark Pratt have fulfilled two, three-year terms which is the maximum amount of time that each can serve. He added it has been a lot of fun working with Elly who knows a lot about Shelter Harbor and about working with the website. Tom sincerely thanked her for her service on behalf of the BoG and from himself as Moderator. Tom continued explaining that Mark Pratt will be rolling off the BoG, but will continue to chair the finance committee. Mark was also sincerely thanked for his service to the BoG and to Shelter Harbor. Both members were applauded by those present in

recognition of their work for Shelter Harbor.

Elly thanked those present and asked for a volunteer to help take over the website. She is willing to help with the transition.

Tom continued to explain that there are two openings on the BoG. John Bruno and Vivian Duff have decided to run for the positions on the BoG and both people are running unopposed. Tom requested a voice vote asking all those in favor of electing John and Vivian. All present voted in favor of electing John and Vivian to the SHFD BoG. They were asked to come up to the table to join the BoG.

XII. Old Business

There was no old business.

XIII. New Business

A. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Motion on Beach Pass Distribution

This motion was proposed by Dick Ferris and seconded by Ed Nardone. Tom Lloyd asked Dick to speak about the motion.

Dick Ferris thanked those present for allocating the time to discuss the motion. Dick explained he had been to a SHFD BoG meeting to explain his motion with the BoG and is convinced that the BoG has the authority to withhold passes from residents who have not paid their fire district taxes. Further, Dick stated that the Fire District has

the right to control the policy. Dick modified his motion and distributed copies of the modified motion to share with attendees of the Annual Meeting.

Joe Rucci stated the motion has to be read. There has to be a motion to amend, there must be a seconder, and there will be a period for discussion on the amendment, followed by a vote to allow the amendment to be brought to the floor. Roberts Rules of Order will be followed in dealing with these motions.

Dick Ferris read the following amended motion aloud to the attendees.

“It is hereby moved that Any District policy that infringes on the access or use of District Facilities must be voted on and approved by the registered voters at an Annual Meeting prior to implementation. The policy of withholding beach passes from property owners that have not paid prior years taxes shall continue to be allowed.” Ed Nardone seconded the amended motion. Following discussion of the amended motion, a voice vote was taken on the floor and the motion to amend passed.

With the amended motion on the floor, the meeting attendees offered many comments and points of view. Eventually, the Moderator called for a voice vote and the motion failed.

B. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Motion on District

Policy on fees/fines associated with access to District Facilities

Dick Ferris offered an amended motion, giving Tom Lloyd a marked up document indicating the changes that would amend the original motion. Dick read his amended motion aloud stating, “It is hereby moved that Any District policy imposing fines, fees or charges related to the access or use of District Facilities must be voted on and approved by the registered voters at an Annual Meeting prior to implementation. The policy of charging a replacement fee for a lost or stolen beach pass shall continue to be allowed to the extent such fee is not punitive. The policy of charging for the direct expense of removing boats from the District boat racks and rack areas shall continue to be allowed.”

Ed Nardone seconded the amended motion. Mark Pratt called the question. A voice vote was taken and the amended motion was approved. Discussion followed.

Tom Lloyd asked for a voice vote. The motion failed.

C. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Motion on Bylaws Amendment for Electronic Notification for SHFD Business

Joe Rucci addressed this motion duly made by Mark Pratt and seconded by Mary Harrop by stating that the motion reflects our modern world. This motion would not allow for electronic voting. Those residents who would like to receive paperless documents could opt to do so. If residents want both hard copy, and electronic

versions, they can opt for this. This motion allows for electronic notification of SHFD BoG meetings and Annual Meetings. This would save money on copying and mailing costs.

This motion was discussed at the recent BoG meeting and the BoG was unanimously in favor. Tom Lloyd stated the BoG would work to address a policy for the electronic notification if the motion carries.

Following discussion, Tom Lloyd called for a voice vote from the floor. The motion carried unanimously.

XIV. Public Comment

Cheryl Ferris stated that the motions brought forward today by her husband, Dick Ferris, were not to disparage the BoG, or any of the BoG members, agents, or anyone in the community.

Betty Waters thanked the makers of the motions to allow those present to have a healthy discussion on the topics.

XV. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was duly made and seconded. The Annual Meeting of the SHFD was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Recorded by

Nonie Price, SHFD Clerk